

a native Carolinian, but the wounds of a friend are faithful. It is better that we reproach ourselves than suffer the reproach of others.

Considering, then, the general poverty of our autobiographic literature, and the general neglect in which we suffer our State and all that pertains to it lie, I shall not regret the contribution of this small volume in her praise and honor, even though it should fail of attracting public attention or meet with harsh criticism. I am not of the spirit of those military leaders who will not fight at times, less from fear of defeat than from dread of losing reputation. I shall be amply repaid for the very small amount of labor here expended if the reading of these sketches shall give pleasure to any son or daughter of North Carolina, or shall cause any deepening of patriotism or awakening of pride of country and of race. I feel sure that the ruthless criticism which we are in the habit of visiting upon the attempts at home authorship, will be mitigated by a just view of my motives, and by the further reflection that where so many stand by and do nothing, severe strictures on the few who *try*, is but little removed from positive meanness.

I am much favored by the kindness of Mr. Hope in appending his beautiful poems, which I am sure will make amends to the reader for many a dull chapter of the Sketches.

Z. B. VANCE.

*April 26, 1875.*